BECOMING A MASTER MODEL RAILROADER

HISTORY

- First proposed by the late Hal Carstens
- Adopted by the NMRA at the Cleveland Convention in 1961
- Originally 9 certificates. MMR required completion of 6.
- Now 7 certificates with at least one from each of 4 categories required for MMR
- Scenery added in 1963
- Prototype Modeler added in 1985

- The AP is designed to be accessible to all members.
- My suggestion: Start with the Golden Spike.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

- Improve your existing skills
- Develop new skills
- Share your skills with others
- Make your layout / modules look and run better
- Remember, it's "pass fail" not a contest
- This is very similar to qualifying for Board Certification in various professions such as law and medicine. It does not mean that you are a better modeler, only that you have taken the time and effort to obtain

- Becoming an MMR is very similar to qualifying for Board Certification in various professions such as law and medicine. As a practical matter, it validates your enhanced competence as a model railroader.
- As of today, 538 modelers have earned their MMR.
- Only 20 – 25 qualify in an average year

THE GOLDEN SPIKE, A GOOD PLACE TO START

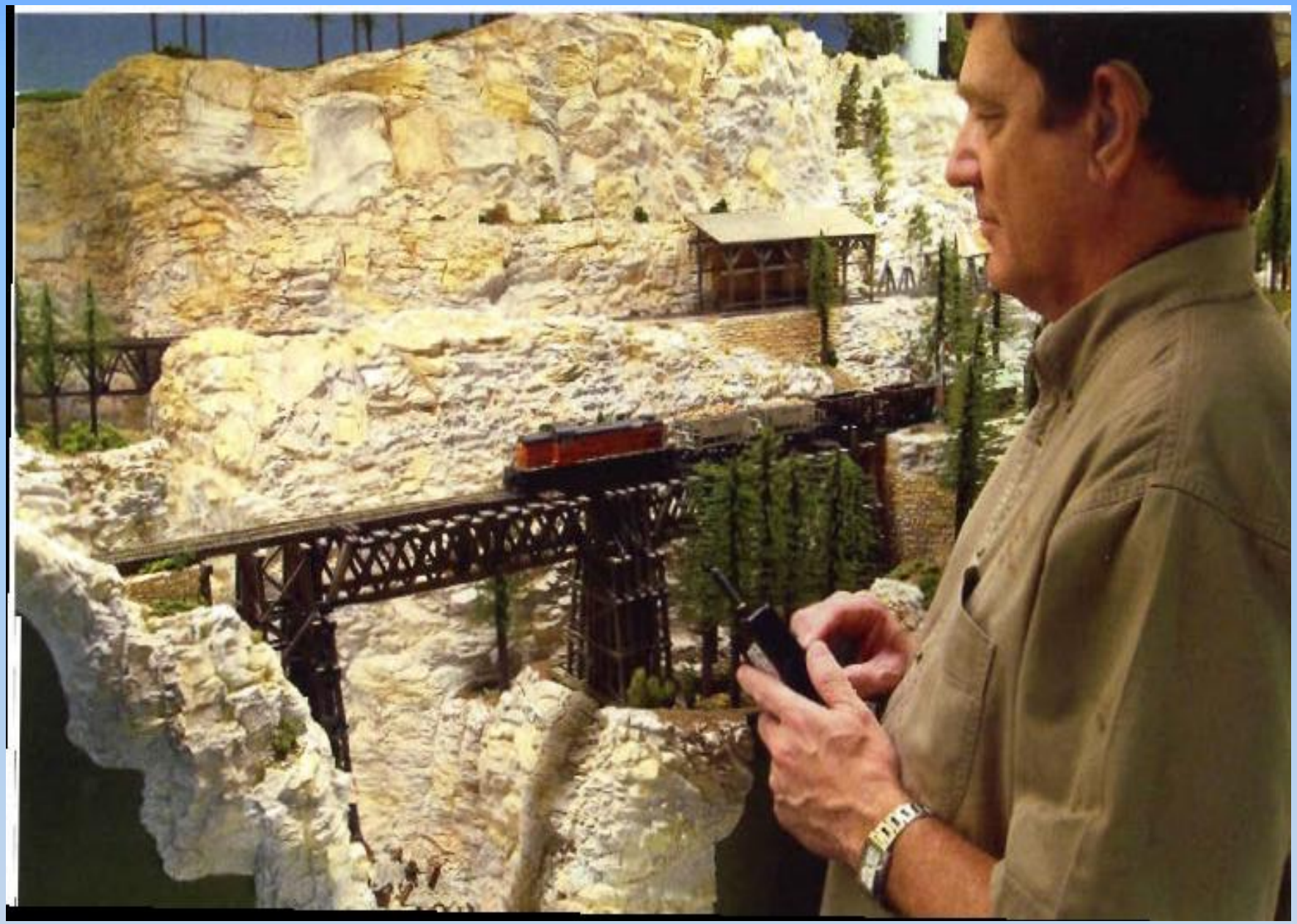
- The Golden Spike is the easiest, and for many people, the first AP award that they earn. It is designed to demonstrate familiarity with different areas of the hobby, rather than expertise in a particular area. So take a look at the requirements - you may find that you have met most, or all of them already.

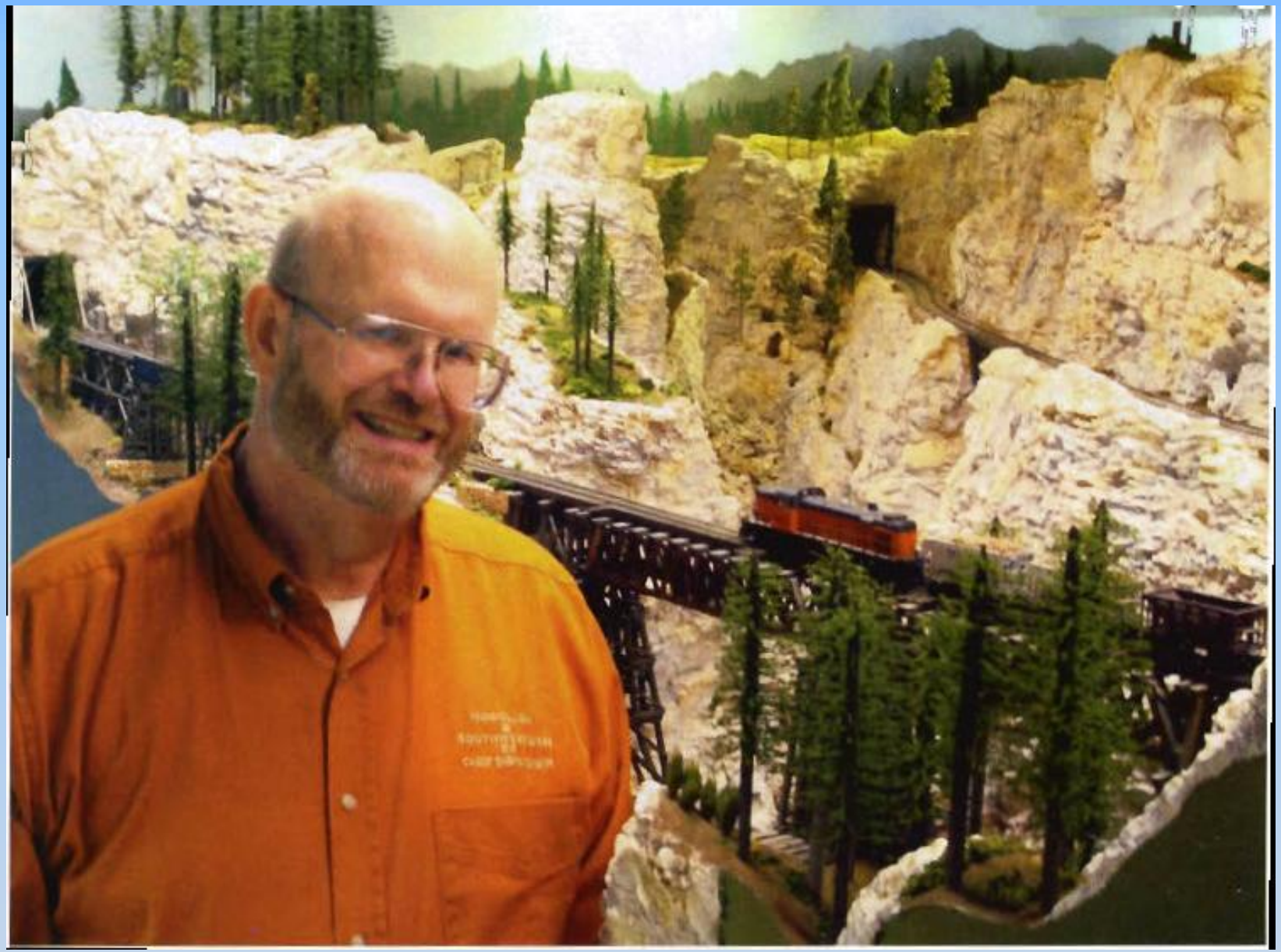
- Rolling Stock: Display six (6) units of rolling stock (Scratchbuilt, craftsman, or detailed commercial kits).
- Model Railroad Setting: Construct a minimum of eight (8) square feet of layout and 5 structures
- Three (3) types of trackage are required (turnout, crossing, etc.). All must be properly ballasted, wired and installed on proper roadbed. Commercial trackage may be used.

RESOURCES

- The requirements for all 11 certificates are on the NMRA web site under the “Achievement Program.”
- 2008 was the “Year of the MMR.” Each month an article on qualifying for one of the 11 certificates was published in the NMRA magazine. These articles are all on the web site.

TOP QUALITY
THE GENERAL TIRE
YOUR GENERAL TIRE DEALER
WEISS
HARRIGAN'S LAUNDRY





- Clinics. A number of clinics at this convention apply directly to requirements for various certificates:
  - Electronics
  - Car building
  - Operations
  - Scenery
  - Civil engineering – building turnouts

- How to video tapes. For instance, Kalmbach's "Dream Plan Build" series has lots of ideas on many subjects. I followed Tony Koester's segment on building turnouts to meet some of the qualifications for my Civil Engineering Certificate.
- Tools! Tools are generally allowed for all certificates. For instance:
  - Fast Tracks Their jigs are allowed! I did not use them as I did not want to spend the money. I did use their pc circuit board ties.

- MicroMark. A great supplier of tools including paints, jigs and the like. They now sell a replacement for many popular Floquil colors
- Walthers. Good service at full retail prices. If you have to have it tomorrow, Walthers will supply and ship it, for a price.
- Manufacturers' web sites, catalogues, and technical support.
- On line and brick and mortar dealers.

- Historical societies. The plans for my NP Boxcar and Reefers came from the NP equipment diagrams available on the NP Historical Society web site. Their magazines are also good sources for plans and articles.
- Newsgroups. I have been a member of Trainorders.com for many years. A searchable resource.

- Photo collections at museums. The Museum of the Rockies has a searchable data base of Ron Nixon's photos, most of the Northern Pacific
- Google! Don't forget Google maps and Google Earth. You can follow the old Northern Pacific grade from Billings to Bozeman on Google Earth.
- Remember, Murphy is alive and well!

LET'S BEGIN

- Motive Power
- Cars
- Structures
- Scenery
- Prototype Models
- Civil
- Electrical
- Dispatcher
- Official
- Volunteer
- Author

- Need 7 certificates, at least one from each group:
- A. Railroad Equipment:
  - Master Builder - Motive Power
  - Master Builder - Cars
- B . Railroad Setting:
  - Master Builder - Structures
  - Master Builder - Scenery
  - Master Builder - Prototype Models

- C. Railroad Construction & Operation:
  - Model Railroad Engineer - Civil
  - Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical
  - Chief Dispatcher
- D. Service to the Hobby & NMRA Member:
  - Association Official
  - Association Volunteer
  - Model Railroad Author

REVIEW EACH CERTIFICATE'S REQUIREMENTS

- See what you already have done.
- Don't read more into the requirements than is there
- Start with the one you are closest to completing. If you have a layout, look at electrical. If you have scenery, that's a good place to start.

Scenery

- Construct a completed section of a model railroad of at least sixty square feet in O scale, or forty-five square feet in S scale, or thirty-two square feet in HO scale, or eighteen square feet in N scale or other scales in proportional relationship to HO scale.
- Shoot photos
- Write up your work and submit to Region AP chairman- Al Boos is the LSR chairman

PHOTOS FROM MY LAYOUT

BIG TIMBER
SUPREME MEATS
02/04/2011

02/04/2011

BIG TIMBER
SUPREME MEATS
02/04/2011

02/04/2011

EAST BIG TIMBER
03/05/2011

BIG TIMBER
SARAN
WARREN
Mobilgas
03/05/2011

12/22/2010

BIG TIMBER
03/06/2011

NORTHERN PACIFIC
NP
91474
PACIFIC FRUIT EXPRESS
P.F.E.
NORTHERN PACIFIC
NP
91261
04/02/2011

NORTHERN PACIFIC
UT LX 49809
04/02/2011

WARREN
Mobilgas
04/02/2011

FARMERS COOPERATIVE
COOP
GRAIN & SUPPLY
MINDEN
HILDRETH
04/02/2011

SUPREME MEATS
Burlington
04/02/2011

NORTHERN PACIFIC
04/02/2011

CB&Q
59056
CB&Q
59056
04/02/2011

402
NORTHERN PACIFIC
402
04/02/2011

NORTHERN PACIFIC
Main Street of the Northwest
N. P.
1653
12/22/2010

- Remember to shoot photos as you go. As my teachers used to say: “show your work!”
- You will be required to submit photos for Scenery and Prototype Modeler that will go to NMRA national for approval.

- Section 2, Intended Setting and Scenic Details
- The layout is loosely set in the Bozeman/Livingston area of South Central Montana. This would be generally north of Yellowstone Park. When the layout was first built the scenery was more arid, like that found in the plains area of Montana east of Billings. The layout itself was begun in 1982 or so.
- A couple years ago I decided that it was time to revitalize the layout. The central peninsula originally had a mountain in the center. The mountain was demolished and an industrial area was installed to add switching opportunities. This very loosely represents the town of Big Timber, Montana. It is meant to be separate from the double track at the base of the rock face. The curving rock face is intended to create a scenic break between the industrial area above and the curving main line below.
- Originally I used green painted fascia to differentiate between the two levels. When I started reconstruction to qualify for the Scenery Certificate, I decided to use a rock cliff.

- The station, ice house and grain elevator next to the backdrop and wall represent Columbus, Montana. You actually can see distant mountains from Columbus. The town gives more opportunities for way freight activity. There is a 7 track single ended staging yard below the town.
- The layout room is 17’ by 23’. The main line runs twice around the room. There is a 7 track staging yard beneath Columbus and a 3 track double ended staging yard beneath the center peninsula.
- The scenery is intended to represent scenic vignettes of towns and industrial areas in a mountain valley environment like those found in South Central and Western Montana. My first wife died five years ago and my new wife is a native of Seattle. She likes the mountains so who am I to argue! The scenery is intended to be green and lush like that found in the mountains in South Central Montana. The backdrop actually is a photo mural from Colorado, but it works.
- The rock faces actually do look a great deal like rock faces along the Northern Pacific main line just east of Livingston, Montana.

- Minimum main line radius is 36 inches. Maximum grade is 2.5%. Mainline switches are #8 and yard switches are #6. This permits operation of full length passenger cars and any class of Northern Pacific steam power. There is a large yard on the other side of the room from Columbus. Scenery has not been finished on that area.
- The layout room is not large enough to create long runs between towns. If I had more room I would have a single level layout but here in Southeast Texas we do not have basements.
- By my calculation I have about 50-60 square feet or more of finished scenery. Rebuilding the scenery on the layout is very much a work in progress. I've found that I actually enjoy building scenery!

REMEMBER!

YOUR APPLICATION IS NOT COMPLETE UNTIL THE PAPERWORK IS DONE!

Steven Barkley
Master Model Railroader
#463
May 1, 2011